

ABSTRACT

A video conference system includes at each of several sites multiple participant stations and a control station. A conference coordinator (e.g., a guard or receptionist) operating the control station receives notice from the control station that a scheduled conference is about to begin and directs a person identified to be a participant of the conference to a station designated by the notice. Signals from participant stations are monitored and if a participant station is determined to be unavailable, the conference may be rescheduled to replace the unavailable station with an alternate available station. Notice sufficient to direct a participant to the alternate station is provided via the control station to the coordinator. The subject of detecting availability and rescheduling alternatives may be an item of equipment or an equipment capability (e.g., a recorder channel to be used for recording the conference). Higher ranking requests may force rescheduling of already scheduled lower ranking conferences.